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THE SENATE SPOTLIGHT

Georgia State Senate Newsletter



2007 SESSION GEARS UP AT THE CAPITOL

“I hope you will join me in working together to ensure that we put Georgia first...,” said Lt. Gov. Cagle.

Last week, the Georgia Capitol was buzzing with anticipation from legislators and staff about the start of the 2007 Legislative Session.

conflicts.

“If you’ve got an issue, I want you to come to me and I want us to sit down and work through it. Because ultimately, it’s not about us, it’s about Georgia and moving our state forward.”



lation regarding increased funding for the PeachCare for Kids program. The resolution urges full funding and reauthorization of the program by the U.S. Congress.

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History was made as Georgia’s first Republican lieutenant governor, Casey Cagle, was sworn into office on Monday.



Lt. Gov. Cagle will serve along side President Pro Tempore Eric Johnson, who was re-elected to office for a third consecutive term.

Among other notable issues

The former state senator presided over the Senate for the first time on Tuesday, urging his colleagues to look beyond each other’s differences and work together to provide the best service for Georgia.

that were discussed throughout the first week, Sen. Seth Harp introduced legislation allowing alcohol sales on Sunday. This controversial issue gained a lot of press over the week, and is a topic expected to garner heavy debate throughout the session.

He concluded his address to the chamber by emphasizing his desire to work directly with senators to resolve any

Sen. Greg Goggans also introduced legis-



Day 5 of the session will begin at 1 p.m. on Monday, Jan 22.

For daily radio feeds of the Senate in action, visit Senate Radio:

http://www.legis.ga.gov/legis/2007_08/senate/senateradio.htm

A different perspective: Session aides

Meet some of the new and returning faces around the Capitol



Catherine Craft

This is my first year as an aide, and I currently work for Senator Bill Hamrick, Chairman of the Banking and Financial Institutions Committee. I am helping Sen. Hamrick with legislation affecting Identity Theft and the Juvenile Justice System.

I graduated Cum Laude with a degree in Political Science in 2004 from the University of West Georgia. While in

I am an aide to Senator Don Thomas, Chairman of the Senate Health and Human Services Committee.

In 2002, I was an intern in the House of Representatives, and then in 2006, I worked as a legislative aide to several Representatives, including Reps. Donna Sheldon, Jeff May, Edward Lindsey, Clay Cox, Melvin Everson, John Meadows and Jack Murphy.

I graduated with a B.S. in Political Science from the University of West Georgia in 2004. I am currently working on a Master of Public Administration at

school at UWG, I was a Senator on the Student Government Association, and later became the Internal Affairs Committee Chair. I was also an active member of the College Republicans, a University Ambassador and a member of Phi Sigma Alpha, a political science honor fraternity.

Last legislative session, I had the opportunity to work as an intern for a lobbyist, so this year I wanted a different perspective of the legislative process. Working with the General Assembly will allow me to gain first-hand experience of how the legislative process works.

Sen. Hamrick and I are from the same hometown, so working with

him gives me the chance to work on legislation that will directly impact my community.

After session, I would like to attend Georgia State Law School and continue a career in public policy.

particularly in building relationships and fulfilling my dedication to public service. I hope to walk these halls one day as a state legislator, serving my district and the citizens of Georgia to the best of my ability.

Also, the chance to work for Sen. Thomas is one I could not pass up. He is an amazing person and physician, a true statesman and the pearl of his district and the state Senate. I feel extremely fortunate to be able to assist Sen. Thomas, and I learn so much from his guidance and expertise.

My goal is to attain a position in either Healthcare Administration or in the Lt. Governor's Office. I am a huge fan of Lt. Gov. Casey Cagle, and truly believe that he has the leadership ability to continue providing a positive future for Georgia.

It's just astonishing to be around and build relationships with all of the amazing people who help shape and influence our code of law.



Russell Crutchfield

UWG, and will graduate in May of this year.

I want to gain greater experience working in the legislative process,



Employee Spotlight on...Brian Scott Johnson



What is your current position with the Senate?

I currently serve as Deputy Director for the Senate Research Office. I am assigned to the Senate Finance, Regulated Industries and Utilities, Reapportionment and Redistricting and Government Oversight committees. During my tenure with the Senate, I have been involved with tax and budget policy, emerging technologies, utilities protection, local government franchising and home heating fuels issues.

Describe your professional background and what brought you to the General Assembly.

I graduated high school at Forest Park in Clayton County. I then went on to earn an Associate's degree from Young Harris College, a journalism degree from the Henry W. Grady College at the University of Georgia and a Juris Doctor from the Walter F. George School of Law at Mercer University. I practiced law with Thompson & Sweeny in Gwinnett County, where I concentrated on local government and general legal issues. I also had the honor to serve as assistant city attorney for the cities of Duluth, Sugar Hill and Grayson, and was an associate school board attorney for the Gwinnett County Board of Education. I also practiced with Owen, Gleaton, Egan, Jones and Sweeny in Midtown Atlanta, where I represented various corporations and public entities.

Describe your personal background.

I am proud to be an Atlanta native. I am the third generation of my family born at Crawford Long Hospital, and spent my youth in Morningside. I was baptized at the old First Baptist Church of Atlanta on Peachtree Street, and fondly recall shopping with my mother at the old Rich's, Davison's and Woolworth retail stores in downtown when they still were open.

How do you spend your time away from work?

First and foremost, I am proud to be a Georgia Bulldog! I love college sports, and am a season-ticket holder for Georgia football and baseball. I am constantly reading, and typically can be found working in my yard at my house along Briarcliff Road. Cody, my German Shepherd, and Maggie, the Brittany Spaniel puppy, receive much of my attention.

Who is your greatest influence?

My grandmother, Onnie Johnson, has had the greatest impact on my life. Ironically, I had the honor of providing her eulogy on January 10, 2007, at the funeral service in her native Gwinnett County. She was born in 1920, and spent her childhood picking cotton where Gwinnett Place Mall stands today. Like most of my generation's grandparents, she was a member of that Greatest Generation. She taught me what it meant to live humbly, decently and frugally. She opened her home to me after my parent's had passed, and she imparted many lessons on me, but it was her never-wavering Christian faith, quiet strength and her life of simplicity that will serve as her life's lessons for me. She always said to not sweat the small stuff.

Describe something people don't know about you.

I am a history buff; I love to read presidential biographies and historical fiction. I also collect maps of any kind, and geographical studies is my SNT (Secret Nerd Trait)!

Remember Dr. King on January 15



Monthly Numbers

The revenue collections for the month of December 2006 (FY07) totaled \$1,634,704,000 compared to \$1,539,857,000 for December 2005 (FY06), an increase of \$94,847,000 or 6.2 percent.

The percentage increase year-to-date for FY07 compared to FY06 is 5.7 percent.



Weekends in January

You deserve a break! Explore some of the events happening in Georgia. Here is an update on current events throughout the state.

ATLANTA — **Friday Jazz at the High Museum** : every third Friday of the month
<http://www.high.org/experience/events/jazz.aspx>

ATLANTA — **I Have A Dream exhibit** : MLK papers at Atlanta History Center : through May 13, 2007
<http://www.atlantahistorycenter.com/template.cfm?cid=779>

ANYWHERE — Watch the **Super Bowl!** (If not for the football or commercials, at least enjoy the junk food) : February 4 : <http://superbowl.com/>



*Wishing a
Happy
Birthday
to :*

January 2007

Senator Renee Unterman	Jan. 7 th
Senator Cecil Staton	Jan. 26 th
Senator Robert Brown	Jan. 30 th
Anna Boggs , Legislative Assistant	Jan. 11 th
Vicki Gibbs , Legislative Assistant	Jan. 12 th
Ethel Blackmon , Legislative Assistant	Jan. 16 th
Glenn Morrison , Legislative Counsel	Jan. 7 th
James McCarthey , IT Division	Jan. 7 th
Amy Kreig , Secretary of the Senate	Jan. 7 th
Charlotte Robinson , Fiscal Office	Jan. 8 th
Michael Bottoms , IT Division	Jan. 12 th
Vickie Lochbaum , Fiscal Office	Jan. 18 th
Jerry McCoy , Fiscal Office	Jan. 20 th
Betsy Howerton , Legislative Counsel	Jan. 23 rd
Sewell Brumby , Director of Legislative Counsel	Jan. 29 th
Natasha Spurrier , Legislative Counsel	Jan. 29 th